



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

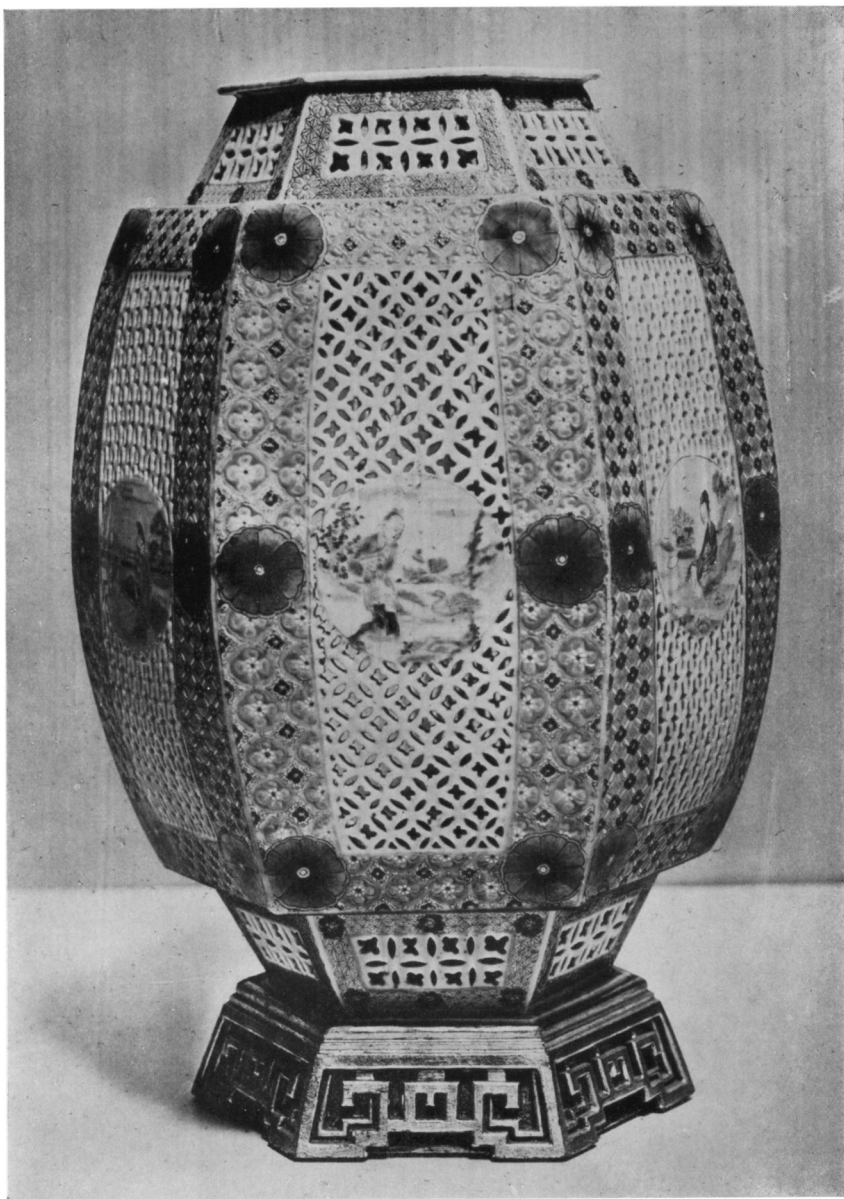
This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



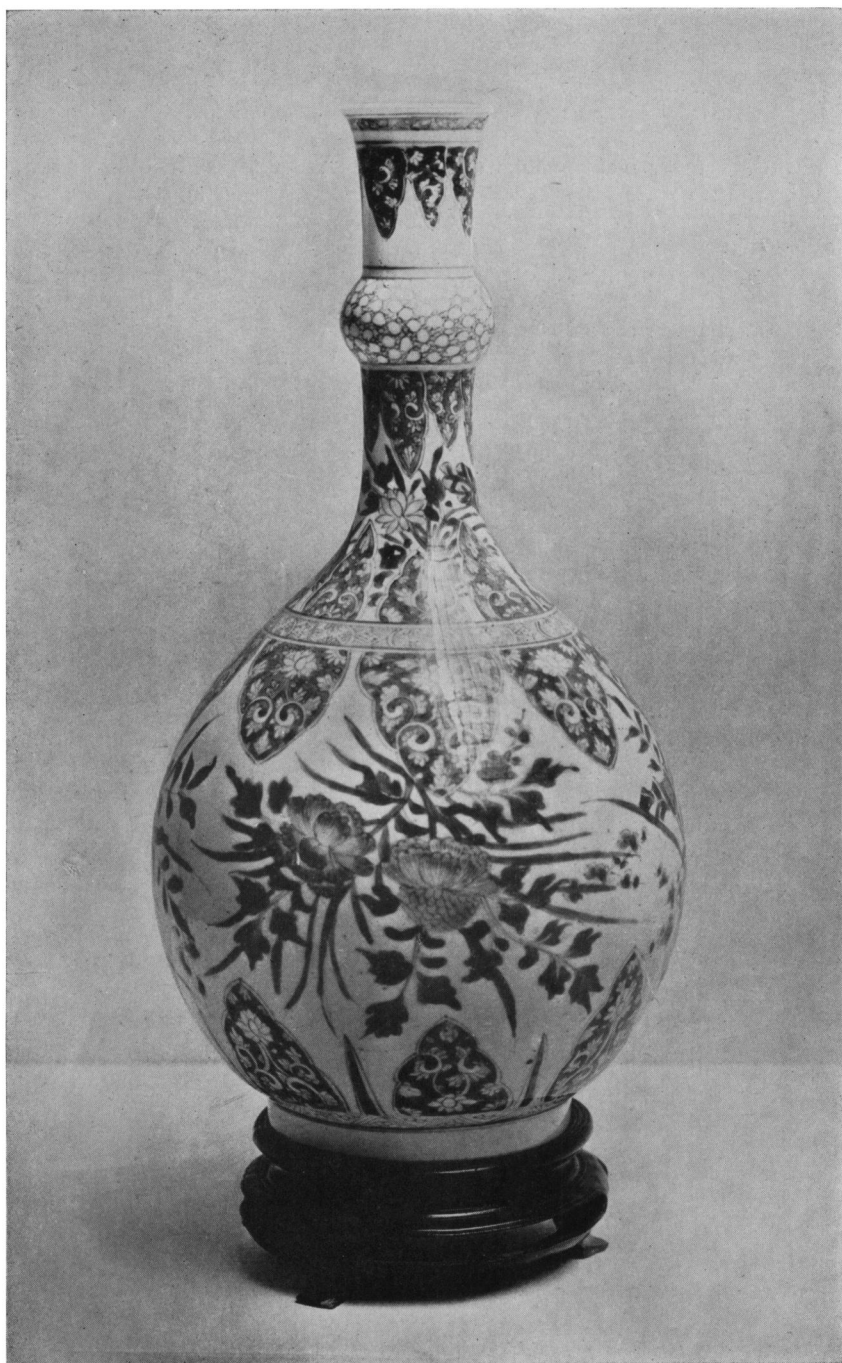
RETICULATED LANTERN, CHINESE

CH'EN LUNG (1736-1795)

Ceramics

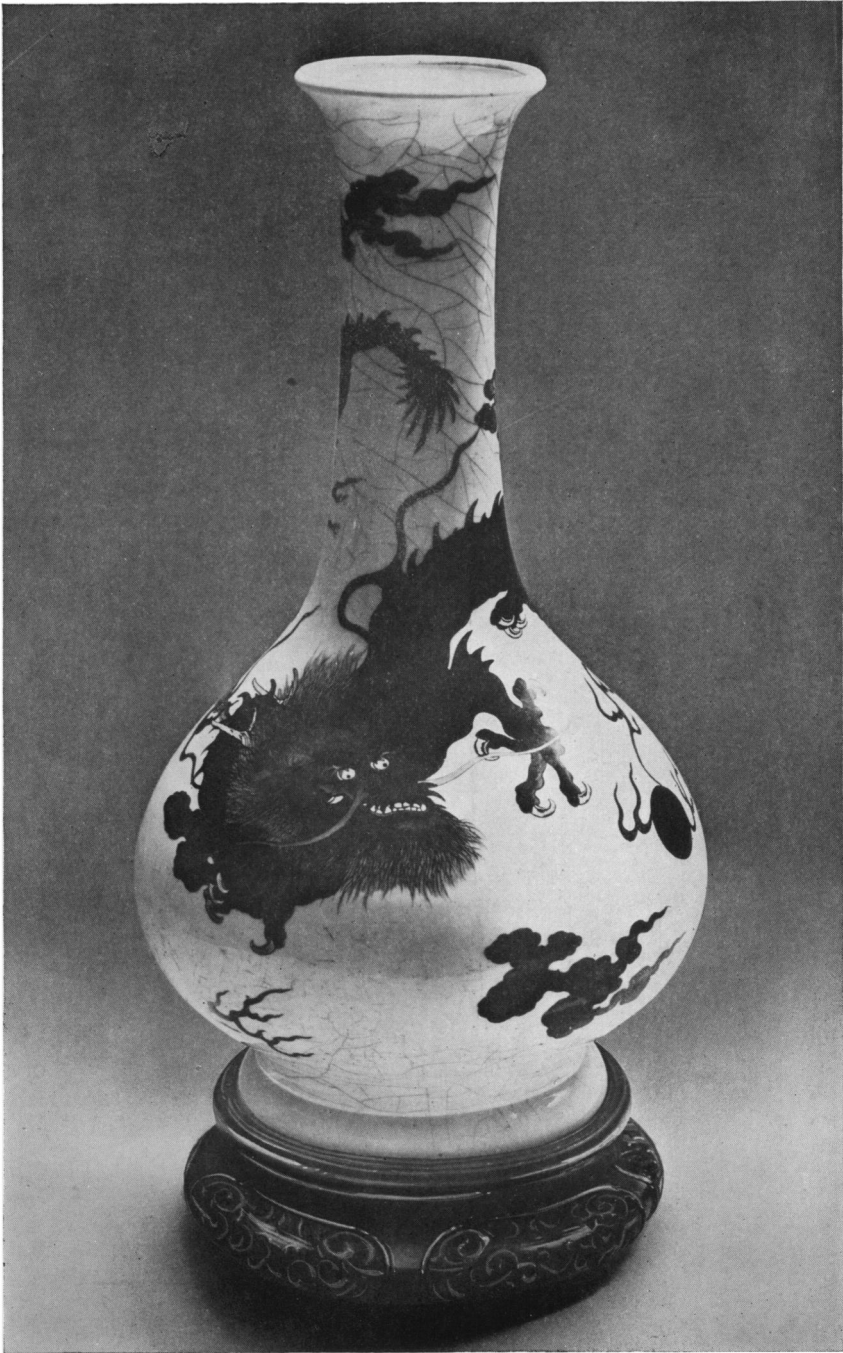
THE collection of ceramic art in the City Art Museum has been greatly increased during the past year by the addition of many fine Chinese porcelains, which is a very great satisfaction to the lovers of this refined craft. There are many who, while not indifferent to art in other forms, see in Chinese ware little save quaint fancies, with not much that can be called beautiful. It is fortunate that collectors, students and lovers of ceramics have a different point of view. It is also fortunate that there have been many to recognize Chinese art in the form in which it has been most characteristically expressed, or the world would now be the poorer for a failure to preserve a good supply of the best examples of this, comparatively speaking, vanished art. The present eager desire to acquire, at almost any price, fine porcelain from the best periods can scarcely be called a fad, but rather the result of conditions; the dispersal of large collections of porcelains have brought unusual opportunities and have stimulated rather than glutted the market. The purchase and retirement of small groups of Chinese porcelains into widely separated repositories is only a sign of the instinct to put by for a rainy day. The business side of art products is like that of other products; porcelains are "booming" now because porcelains of like quality are going to be scarce; the old conditions that produced the best are no more likely to be revived than those which led to the production of the best in classic and Renaissance art in other countries. The golden age having passed, there is every reason for preserving the best that remains from it. It is improbable that the artist will ever again work under the protection of a feudal lord, inspired solely by a wish to please his patron, free from pecuniary cares, with plenty of time and the best of materials, carrying on a family tradition and satisfying his own artistic soul at one and the same time.

Whether porcelain had its origin in China as far back as the T'ang dynasty (618-907 A. D.) or later, is of special interest only to students; it is highly improbable that we will ever see any ware of that period. It may be admitted that perfect ware of its kind was a result of sporadic successes at various times, but comparatively unvarying success was not reached until the XVI Century. The reigns of K'ang-hsi, Yung Cheng and Ch'ien Lung are considered the Renaissance of the art, and if all save the purist take most pleasure in the work of those periods, it is for the same reason that we like the craft work of the Renaissance in Europe; for its skilful use of materials, freedom and lightness of fancy. The pupil having done with school, the secrets discovered, the pioneer work done, the artist was able to express himself freely and take pleasure in pleasing. In this Renaissance of Chinese art in the XVII and XVIII Centuries we find the highest type of chemical, mechanical and artistic success in ceramic ware; the hardest and finest porcelain, best potting, richest enamels and most perfect glazes. The Museum now has quite a comprehensive collection of porcelains that reach this standard of excellence; a number of examples that have been considered worthy to rank with the best of their kind, that have come out of noted collections where they have rested since beginning their long journey from China to St. Louis, where, it is to be hoped, they will long be



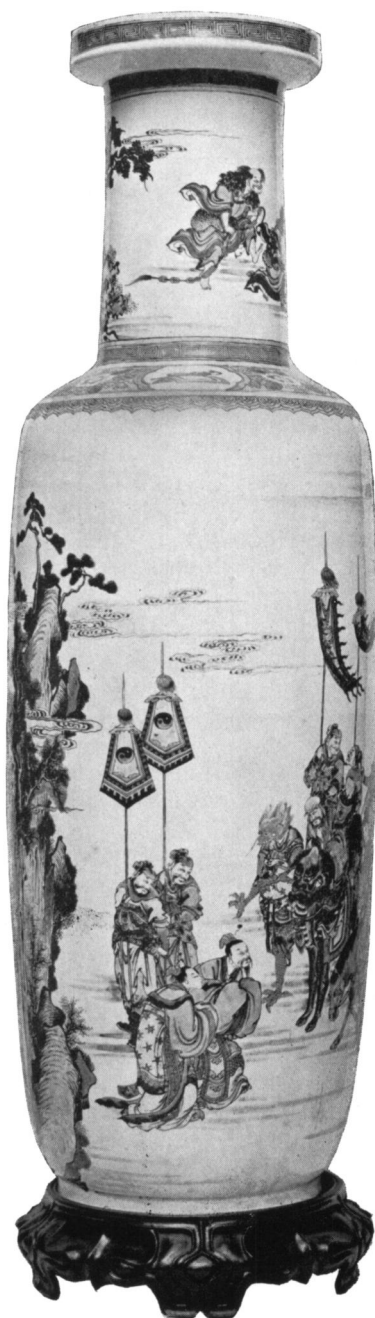
BOTTLE-SHAPE VASE, CHINESE

K'ANG-HSI (1662-1722)



BOTTLE-SHAPE VASE, CHINESE

YUNG CHENG (1723-1735)



CLUB-SHAPE VASE, CHINESE



K'ANG-HSI (1662-1722)

a pleasure to all and an inspiration to craftsmen. The largest number acquired at one time since the spring of 1915 is from the well-known collection of the late J. Pierpont Morgan, and contains examples of most of the families of wares as classified by collectors. In the blue and white are several fine bulb and ovoid vases showing Persian influence in form and decoration; these are from the K'ang-hsi period.

A quadrangular vase or jar, its corners bound with the long and short units of the pa-qua has the spaces between them dotted with blue butterflies and small detached sprays of emblematic flowers in blue on a white ground, from the reign of Yung Cheng.

A "ginger jar" of comfortable proportions has the appropriate decoration for such ware presented at the New Year, the winter blooming plum and the breaking up of the ice in the river typified by the shaded blue background with "cracked ice" lines.

The collection contains two examples of peach bloom, a covered rouge box and water vessel, dainty and elegant in effect; a lantern of eggshell porcelain, reticulated and decorated with the greatest refinement of color; a beautiful dark blue is the nearest approach to a strong note in the polychrome scheme of color—from the Ch'ien Lung period and certainly at the crest of the wave before its subsidence into lifeless mannerism.

Three examples of celadon are from an early period, and there are a number of solid color pieces in apple green, turquoise, clair de lune, Mazarine and other blues. A very pleasing piece is a bottle, inclining to a bulb form with a slender neck; on a beautiful, slightly crackled, ivory ground is a large coral red four-clawed dragon pursuing or guarding, as he is variously represented, the effulgent jewel in the sky. Those who are familiar with the many legends, sacred and otherwise, that furnish motives for the Chinese and Japanese decorator, will find much to enjoy in their representation on the various acquisitions in this field during the past year; the figures and symbols, emblems of longevity, happiness and good wishes inspired by an Epicurean type of philosophy.

An interesting and valuable addition to the ceramic wares, which, however, is not from the Morgan collection, is a remarkably large white club-shaped vase from the K'ang-hsi period; it is almost thirty inches high and is decorated with an incident which occurred about the year 1000 B. C., a memorable call upon a Taoist hermit made by the Emperor Mu Wang. The Emperor, on foot, with a modest retinue of three, meets the hermit mounted on a ky-lin and accompanied by some twenty immortals in rich garments with standards and other insignia. This event, which occurred in a sacred region of the gods, represented by beautifully painted pine trees and rocks, is treated in a manner to awaken the greatest admiration for the beauty of the drawing and colors, the perfect knowledge of the decorative effect of rich color masses against other rich masses of beautiful white glaze. One's respect for the owners of the possibly three-score hands through which this piece has passed becomes almost an awe when thinking of how each has contributed his share toward the success of a perfect work, modestly effacing himself to the point of extinction. It is so entirely unoccidental. Another



BRONZE DRAGON

JAPANESE

beautiful group is a small collection of solid color porcelains, ranging from an early ivory white through cafe au lait, tea leaf, apple green, rose souffle, sang de boeuf, turquoise, purple, tortoise shell, to mirror black. A very high standard of excellence in this department of art has been established through these purchases by the Museum during the past year.

Bronze Dragon

The dragon, emblematic compound of many creatures, the characteristic forms and powers of which he assumes, typifies in Japanese legend, vigilance and strength; under this aspect he is usually represented in art as pursuing or guarding the sacred jewel of omnipotence.

In his many-sided character, for he watches treasures, regulates the rain-fall, supports the temple bells, is of various colors, according to which his breath becomes gold or crystal balls, living in spring in the heavens, in summer in the clouds, in autumn in the sea, and in winter sleeping in the earth, he is naturally a valued model for the painter and sculptor. In a bronze recently acquired by the Museum, the sculptor has happily made use of the conception of the dragon god rising from the sea, his breath turning into crystal and the foam of the waves changing into crystal balls, the emblems of purity. The bronze in which he is cast is the yellow alloy, sentoku, with a judicious use of a chocolate brown oxide; a swirling wave forms the support, mingled in which one catches a bit of the scaly body of the Riu-jin as he mounts to the heavens holding in his left claw (it is usually the right) a small ball of rock crystal of perfect form and limpidity. His congealing breath forms the largest crystal ball and there are five others of various sizes on the larger masses of spray. The surface of the wave is modelled with liquid smoothness in contrast to the scaly surface of the dragon; all projecting points, with the exception of the claws employed in holding up the one ball, are turned downward; spines, horns, whiskers and ends of spray.

The composition is exceptionally good and the casting and chasing excellently done.